WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A gaming terminal for playing a wagering game, comprising:

a basic game having a plurality of symbols that indicate a randomly selected outcome of said basic game, said randomly selected outcome being selected in response to a wager input by a player; and

a progressive game feature having a progressive award that is triggered by a predetermined event, said progressive award increasing based on said wager input being received at said gaming terminal and other wager inputs being received from other gaming terminals, said progressive award has an actual value determined by follow-up game play by said player at said gaming terminal.

2.   The gaming terminal of claim 1, wherein said follow-up game play is one or more free spins of the basic game.

3.   The gaming terminal of claim 2, wherein said predetermined event is said randomly selected outcome in said basic game being a progressive-award outcome.

4.   The gaming terminal of claim 2, wherein the number of said free spins of the basic game yields a monetary or non-monetary value associated with randomly selected outcomes of said free spins of said basic game.

5.   The gaming terminal of claim 2, wherein the number of said free spins of the basic game has a minimum number of free spins.

6.   The gaming terminal of claim 2, wherein the number of said free spins of the basic game has a maximum number of free spins.

7.   The gaming terminal of claim 1, wherein said progressive award is associated with a multiplier value, said multiplier value increases the value of a monetary award achieved in said follow-up game play.

8.   The gaming terminal of claim 1, wherein said predetermined event is a selection of a progressive-award outcome from a plurality of progressive game outcomes that are randomly selectable in response to receiving said wager input.

9.   The gaming terminal of claim 1, wherein said progressive award is measured in integers and increases by an incremental value for each wager input, said

incremental value being a fraction of the integers associated with said progressive award.

10   The gaming terminal of claim 1, wherein said follow-up game play is a progressive game that is played by said player in response to said predetermined event being triggered.

11.   The gaming terminal of claim 10, wherein said progressive game includes a player-selectable grid of options.

12.   The gaming terminal of claim 11, wherein said player-selectable grid of options has options associated with value and game-terminating options.

13.   The gaming terminal of claim 12, wherein said options associated with value include multiplier values for increasing the value of a monetary award.

14.   The gaming terminal of claim 12, wherein said number of game-terminating options changes as said progressive award changes.

15.   The gaming terminal of claim 14, wherein said number of game-terminating options decreases as said progressive award increases.

16.   The gaming terminal of claim 1, wherein said progressive game feature has multiple progressive awards that are determined by follow-up game play by said player at said gaming terminal.

17.   The gaming terminal of claim 1, wherein said actual value may be zero based on said follow-up game play.

18.   A gaming terminal for playing a wagering game, comprising:

a basic game having a plurality of symbols that indicate a randomly selected outcome of said basic game, said randomly selected outcome being selected in response to a wager input by a player, wherein one of said randomly selected outcomes includes a progressive-award outcome that yields a progressive award, said progressive award increasing based on said wager input being received at said gaming terminal and other wager inputs being received from other gaming terminals; and

wherein said progressive award initially lacks an actual value when awarded to said player, but has an expected value such that said player may later achieve one of a plurality of actual values.

19.   The gaming terminal of claim 18, wherein said one of said plurality of actual values is determined by free game play of said basic game.

20.   The gaming terminal of claim 18, wherein one of said plurality of actual values is determined by the playing of a progressive game by said player in response to said player achieving said progressive-award outcome.

21.   The gaming terminal of claim 18, wherein one of said plurality of actual values is zero.

22.   A gaming terminal for playing a wagering game, comprising:

a basic game having a plurality of symbols that indicate a randomly selected outcome of said basic game, said randomly selected outcome being selected in response to a wager input, wherein one of said randomly selected outcomes includes a progressive-award outcome that yields a progressive award, said progressive award increasing based on said wager input being received at said gaming terminal and other wager inputs being received from other gaming terminals; and

wherein said progressive award includes one or more free plays of said basic game.

23.   The gaming terminal of claim 22, wherein a total number of said free plays of said basic game is associated with an amount of said progressive award that is achieved by said player.

24.   The gaming terminal of claim 23, wherein said amount of said progressive award is determined by said randomly selected outcome of said basic game.

25.   The gaming terminal of claim 22, wherein said one or more free plays can achieve a monetary value of zero.

26.   A gaming terminal for playing a wagering game, comprising:

a basic game having a plurality of symbols that indicate a randomly selected outcome of said basic game, said randomly selected outcome being selected in response to a wager input; and

a progressive game with a progressive award that changes based on said wager input being received at said gaming terminal and other wager inputs being received from other gaming terminals, said progressive game being triggered by a player achieving a progressive-award outcome in said basic game, said progressive game having a player-selectable grid of options, some of said options being associated with value and some of said options terminating play of said progressive game, wherein

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said options are determined by an amount of said progressive award that is achieved by said player.

27.   The gaming terminal of claim 26, wherein said options associated with value include a multiplier for increasing the monetary value of said progressive award.

28.   The gaming terminal of claim 26, wherein the number of said options terminating play of said progressive game changes as said progressive award changes.

29.   The gaming terminal of claim 28, wherein the number of said options terminating game play of said progressive game decreases as said progressive award increases.

30.   The gaming terminal of claim 26, wherein said progressive award can result in a monetary value of zero.

31.   A method for playing a wagering game, comprising:

conducting a basic game having a plurality of symbols that indicate a randomly selected outcome selected from a plurality of outcomes, said plurality of outcomes including a progressive-award outcome, said randomly selected outcome being selected in response to a wager input by a player;

in response to said randomly selected outcome being said progressive-award outcome, providing to a player a progressive award, said progressive award changing based on said wager input being received at said gaming terminal and other wager inputs being received from other gaming terminals, said progressive award having an actual value determined by follow-up game play by said player at said gaming terminal;

allowing said player to engage in said follow-up game play; and

awarding to said player said actual value in response to outcomes achieved in said follow-up game play.

32.   The method of claim 31, wherein said allowing said player to engage in said follow-up game play includes providing said player with one or more free spins of said basic game.

33.   The method of claim 31, wherein said allowing said player to engage in said follow-up game play includes providing said player with a progressive game that is played by said player in response to said player achieving said progressive-award outcome.

34.   The method of claim 31, wherein said plurality of outcomes includes a second progressive-award outcome and further comprising, in response to said randomly selected outcome being said second progressive-award outcome, providing to a player a second progressive award, said second progressive award increasing based on said wager input being received at said gaming terminal and other wager inputs received from other gaming terminals, said second progressive award being different from said progressive award and being determined by follow-up game play by said player at said gaming terminal.

35.   A gaming system having a progressive game having a progressive award, comprising:

a progressive game controller for controlling said progressive game;

a plurality of gaming terminals coupled to said progressive game controller, each of said gaming terminals having a basic game having a plurality of symbols that indicate a randomly selected outcome of said basic game; and

wherein said progressive game controller changes said progressive award based on wager inputs being received at said plurality of gaming terminals and, in response to a predetermined event being triggered, said progressive game controller awarding said progressive award, said progressive award having an actual value determined by follow-up game play by a player at said one of said plurality of gaming terminals.

36.   The gaming system of claim 35, wherein said follow-up game play is one or more free spins of said basic game.

37.   The gaming system of claim 35, wherein said follow-up game play is a progressive game that is played by said player in response to said predetermined event being triggered.

38.   The gaming system of claim 35, wherein said progressive game includes a second progressive award, said second progressive award increasing based on said wager inputs being received at said plurality of gaming terminals, said second progressive award being different from said progressive award and being determined by follow-up game play by a player at one of said gaming terminals.

39.   The gaming system of claim 35, further comprising signage connected to said plurality of gaming terminals, said signage including a display for displaying said progressive award.

40.   The gaming system of claim 39, wherein said signage displays multiple progressive awards.

41.   The gaming system of claim 35, wherein said predetermined event occurs when said randomly selected outcome of said basic game at one of said plurality of gaming terminals is said progressive-award outcome.

42.   The gaming system of claim 35, wherein said predetermined event is a selection of a progressive-award outcome by said progressive game controller, said progressive-award outcome being one of a plurality of progressive game outcomes that are selectable by said progressive game controller in response to receiving a wager input at one of said plurality of gaming terminals.

43.   A method of playing a progressive wagering game having a progressive award, comprising:

conducting a basic game at a plurality of gaming terminals in response to receiving wager inputs;

changing said progressive award in response to said wager inputs received at said plurality of gaming terminals; and

in response to a randomly selected outcome being a progressive-award outcome, awarding said progressive award to a player, said progressive award having an actual value determined by follow-up game play by said player at said gaming terminal.

44.   The method of claim 43, further comprising the step of allowing said player to engage in said follow-up game play.

45.   The method of claim 44, wherein said follow-up game play is free plays of said basic game.

46.   The method of claim 43, further comprising the step of awarding to said player said actual value in response to outcomes achieved in said follow-up game play.

47.   The method of claim 43, wherein said randomly selected outcome is a progressive-award outcome achieved in said basic game.

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48.   The method of claim 43, wherein said randomly selected outcome is an outcome that is not selected during said basic game.

49.   The method of claim 48, wherein said randomly selected outcome is determined by a progressive-game controller that is external to said plurality of gaming terminals.

50.   The method of claim 48, wherein said randomly selected outcome is determined after a preselected wager amount is received at one of said plurality of gaming terminals.

51.   The method of claim 50, wherein said preselected wager amount is the maximum wager amount at said plurality of gaming terminals.

52.   The method of claim 50, further including, in response to said wager input being more than said preselected wager amount and said progressive award being awarded, using a remainder of said wager input to determine if a consolation prize is won.

53.   The method of claim 50, wherein said progressive award has multiple levels and further including, in response to said wager input being more than said preselected wager amount and said progressive award being awarded, using a remainder of said wager input to determine a level of said progressive award that is awarded.